

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides a detailed overview of the research background, research questions, research purpose, research scope, research significance, conceptual framework, and previous studies.

#### **A. Background of Study**

Extensive Reading is a practical language learning approach used through students' exposure to many readings, focusing on understanding the entire text. Day & Bamford (1998), define Extensive Reading as an approach used in language learning where students are asked to read many relatively easy and enjoyable texts to develop reading skills. Extensive Reading has long played a role as a strategy that can be used in learning to develop language skills through repeated exposure to language structures in meaningful contexts. Nation & Macalister (2020), emphasise that Extensive Reading provides comprehensive exposure to language through natural use, allowing learners to develop an implicit understanding of language in various contexts.

Although the benefits of Extensive Reading have been widely recognised, its implementation in Indonesia faces significant challenges. Based on data, in Indonesia, students' interest in reading English is still relatively low, and students' motivation is poor because students still think that reading English is tedious and difficult to understand. Israel (2017), said that the reason why students' reading interest is relatively low is because students consider reading to be a tedious activity; most students only read for academic purposes (extrinsic motivation), not as a fun activity (intrinsic motivation). This is in line with the explanation from Mega (2018), that many students have difficulty finding reading materials that suit students' interests. Therefore, the availability of interesting reading materials for students is an important factor in student involvement in Reading. In this case, digital technology has made it easier for students to find interesting reading materials.

The development of digital technology has significantly transformed English learning practices, especially in overcoming challenges in Reading. Stockwell (2016), argues that a modern digital-based learning environment increases access to authentic English materials and expands opportunities for acquiring a second language. Digital technology, especially social media, offers various types of English content in authentic contexts and is relevant to students' daily lives. Therefore, this significantly raises the potential to encourage extensive reading involvement.

Instagram, as a popular social media platform, offers potential that can be used as a source of reading material in Extensive Reading. Sitorus & Azir (2021), explain that Instagram provides authentic and reliable content through verified accounts that can support language learning, especially in reading. Instagram captions have characteristics that are in line with the principles of Extensive Reading, even though the text format is relatively short. The main principle of Extensive Reading is that reading materials must be easily understood by students (Day & Bamford, 2002). This is so that students can read fluently without obstacles in understanding the language in the text, and it can be used as accessible reading material.

The principle of Extensive Reading, according to Richards & Renandya (2002), is reinforced by emphasising that students can read large amounts, freely choose reading materials, access diverse reading materials based on topics and genres of interest, and appropriate reading materials based on comprehension levels. Instagram captions support this principle because students can read short texts in a short time, which makes reading activities light. In addition, diverse topics such as lifestyle, travel, politics, business and health from various genres provide opportunities to choose reading materials based on student interests. Therefore, the ease and readability of Instagram captions play an important role in shaping students' perceptions, which play a crucial role, especially in the success of Extensive Reading.

Students' perceptions of reading materials in learning are crucial in influencing the success of implementing Extensive Reading by using Instagram captions as reading materials. According to Grabe & Stoller (2020), students' perceptions can

significantly influence students' involvement and motivation in language learning. In line with this view Aloraini & Cardoso (2020), explain that students' perceptions of media use for language learning can vary depending on the student's proficiency level. Thus, understanding students' perceptions is the primary key to determining the effectiveness of using Instagram captions as reading material in Extensive Reading.

Several studies on Extensive Reading have been conducted. First, a study conducted by Agustina, Susilo, & Surya (2022) examined how using short stories in Extensive Reading can improve the reading attitudes of EFL students. The results of this study indicate that the use of short stories in Extensive Reading has a positive effect on the reading attitudes of EFL students in secondary schools, especially in terms of comfort and anxiety. In addition, Ateek (2021) examined the impact of Extensive Reading in EFL classes using books in the library. The results of this study indicate that Extensive Reading helps improve EFL students' reading fluency and vocabulary, which is supported by students' positive experiences with interesting and easy reading materials. Last, Abdulrahman (2022) explored students' experiences in Extensive Reading courses during online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. The results of this study indicate that Extensive Reading during online learning provides benefits in improving students' vocabulary, habits, and reading speed.

This contrasts with previous studies that examined extensive Reading activities using short stories, printed books, and formal e-learning as reading materials. No research specifically discusses examining Instagram captions as reading materials in Extensive Reading activities. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap by exploring EFL students' perceptions of using Instagram captions as reading materials in Extensive Reading activities using qualitative methods, especially in the context of learning at the university level.

Based on the research gaps outlined above, this study is crucial to uncover the potential of Instagram captions as reading material for extensive reading activities. Instagram can be used not only for entertainment or healing but also as a language learning tool. The Instagram caption feature, which presents concise, authentic text

relevant to students' lives, has the potential to be engaging reading material while simultaneously increasing their motivation and interest in reading.

## **B. Research Questions**

Based on the preceding background, there are two research questions about the research problem:

1. What are EFL students' perceptions of using Instagram captions as reading material in extensive reading activities?
2. What factors influence EFL students' perceptions of reading Instagram captions as part of extensive reading?

## **C. Research Purposes**

Besides the research questions above, there are the following research purposes:

1. To explore EFL students' perceptions of using Instagram captions as reading material in extensive reading activities.
2. To identify the factors influencing EFL students' perceptions of reading Instagram captions as part of extensive reading.

## **D. Research Scope**

This study examines the perceptions of EFL students enrolled in the English Education Department at an Islamic university in West Java, Indonesia, regarding the use of Instagram captions as reading material in extensive reading activities. This study examines how the use of Instagram captions in an Extensive Reading course can improve students' reading skills and interests. Specifically, reading Instagram captions is seen as part of the learning process in the Extensive Reading course. Although the context of this study is within the course, the emphasis is placed on the activity, not the course content.

## **E. Research Significance**

This study has theoretical and practical significance as it provides insight into EFL students' perceptions of reading Instagram captions in the context of Extensive Reading.

### **1. Theoretical Significances**

This study offers significant insights into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' perception of leveraging social media technology, particularly Instagram captions, for Extensive Reading. This study aims to elucidate the extent to which concise textual elements, such as Instagram captions, contribute to the efficacy of Extensive Reading, which traditionally employs extensive textual materials to enhance reading interest and motivation skills. The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the relevance and effectiveness of Instagram as a learning medium, as well as the factors that influence students' perceptions of its utilization. The study's findings serve as a valuable reference for educators, offering insights into the potential of social media to support creative and contextualized English language learning. Additionally, it provides a foundation for further research by other scholars interested in exploring the use of Instagram in the context of Extensive Reading.

### **2. Practical Significances**

#### **a. For Students**

This study offers insight into the efficacy of Instagram captions as reading material in Extensive Reading activities. The findings indicate that using Instagram captions has enhanced students' interest, motivation, and reading ability.

#### **b. For Lecturers**

This research provides valuable insights to lecturers in integrating technology and social media, such as Instagram, into English language learning as a medium. Lecturers use the findings of this study to design and develop learning materials that are more interesting and relevant to student's interests by optimizing the use of social media technology to improve students' reading skills.

c. For Researchers

This study provides additional information about using Instagram social media technology in English language learning, especially in Extensive Reading. The findings of this study provide a basis for further research on the effectiveness of short texts, such as captions, in improving reading skills, as well as the factors that influence students' perceptions of social media as a medium in English language learning.

**F. Conceptual Framework**

Extensive Reading is an approach used in English language teaching where students are expected to read a large number of texts with a focus on understanding the text's content rather than the grammar structure as outlined by (Day & Bamford, 1998). According to Day & Bamford (2002), Extensive Reading has several main characteristics, such as freedom in choosing reading materials, reading goals related to pleasure, information and general understanding, and reading as much as possible. In line with that Zhou (2021), emphasizes that principles such as reading in large quantities, freedom in choosing materials, and focus on general understanding are key in Extensive Reading, which can be applied in digital-based reading materials such as social media. This allows students to choose reading materials based on their interests and needs. Hedgcock & Ferris (2009), explain that the benefits of extensive Reading include improving comprehension skills, building linguistic knowledge, increasing self-confidence, and student motivation in Reading.

Reading material is a variety of texts selected for language learning that cover various genres and formats, both print and digital, designed to facilitate the development of reader literacy, as explained (Hedgcock & Farris, 2018). In the context of reading materials, Grabe & Stoller (2011), argue that reading materials used in Extensive Reading must be adjusted to the level of student ability, genres, and reading topics that are varied, interesting, and easily accessible. Technological developments allow digital platforms such as Instagram to be a source of reading materials. Various accounts with educational content, literature, or news sources can be sources of reading materials. This aligns with the concept of multimodal



literacy, according to Kress (2009), which refers to the ability to understand information conveyed through various communication methods through text, images, and other visual elements. In the context of Instagram captions, this multimodal literacy is critical because students must interpret a message not only in the form of text but also in visual forms, such as images or emoticons. Therefore, Rosdiani, Mertosono, & Emiwati (2022), emphasized that using Instagram captions as reading material can improve students' vocabulary and reading comprehension.

Students' perceptions of using Instagram captions as reading materials for Extensive Reading are important. Schiffman & Wisenblit (2015), explain that perception is a cognitive process in interpreting information. Perception is influenced by several factors, one of which is experience. In the context of language learning Ellis (2019), emphasizes that language learners' perceptions play an important role in determining their success in learning a language. Therefore, understanding students' perceptions of using Instagram captions as reading materials in Extensive Reading is crucial, considering that Instagram provides easy accessibility to finding reading materials closer to students' daily lives.

In addition, students' perceptions of Instagram captions as reading material in Extensive Reading are categorized into several types. Gibson, et al. (1982), explained that cognitive perception focuses on students' understanding of the reading material that students read. Schunk (2012), says affective perception focuses on a person's emotional aspects, such as a sense of interest and motivation towards an object. This includes students' emotions towards motivation and interest in reading Instagram captions. John M (2009), argues that practical perception focuses on students' assessment of the benefits and effectiveness of Instagram captions as reading material in extensive reading. Finally, aesthetic perception also plays a role in influencing students towards the attractiveness of Instagram captions based on language style, word choice, and Instagram caption visuals in line with the statement (D.E, 1971).

In this study, Instagram captions function as a medium for reading materials, with Instagram captions as the independent variable. Meanwhile, EFL students' perceptions of Instagram captions are the dependent variables measured through

interviews. This research design uses a qualitative research method with a case study approach. This study involved a group of students selected purposively to observe their perceptions of using Instagram captions in Extensive Reading activities as reading materials. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, and documents, and then analyzed using a thematic approach to explore students' perceptions of reading Instagram captions as reading materials. This conceptual framework is also visualized in a diagram to clarify the relationship between Instagram captions, EFL students' perceptions, and reading comprehension improvement in Extensive Reading. The conceptual framework is visually represented in the following diagram:

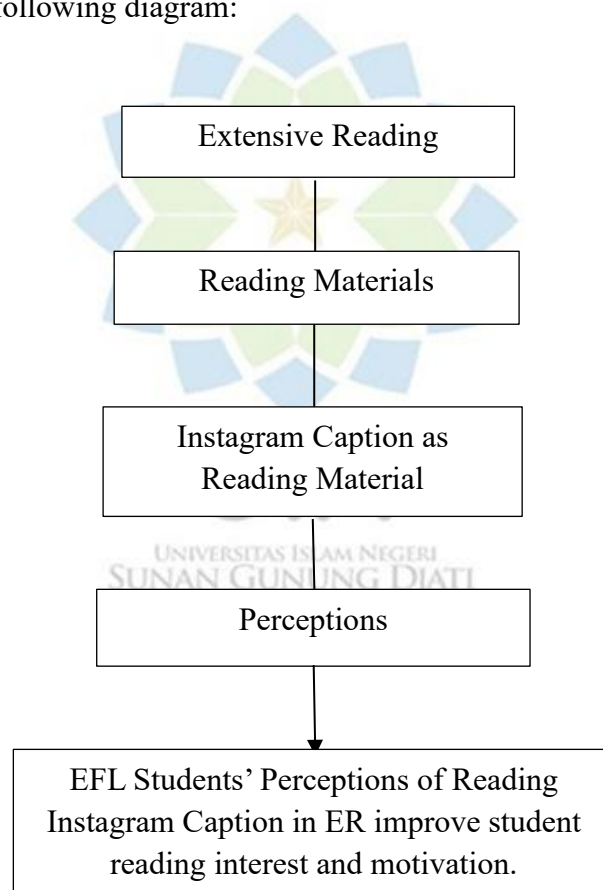


Figure 1. 1 Conceptual Framework



## **G. Previous Studies**

Several studies on Extensive Reading have been conducted that are related to the current study. First, Shareef, L. A. (2023) research investigated the Perceptions of EFL Students on e-books based on Extensive Reading at a Tertiary Level. This study focuses on students' perceptions of the e-book-based Extensive Reading program, including its impact on their performance, motivation, language learning anxiety, and attitude toward English language learning. Questionnaires, surveys, and interviews were used as data collection tools in this study using a mixed-method research method. The participants of this study consisted of 50 first-year students who participated in the e-book-based Extensive Reading program at TISHK International University during the 2022-2023 Academic Year in Erbil, Iraq. The results of this study show that e-book-based Extensive Reading can improve performance and motivation, overcome anxiety in learning English, and change students' attitudes towards learning English.

Second, research conducted by Permatasari, Wijayanto, and Kristina (2020) examined Extensive Reading on Wattpad and Its Benefits to Students English Skills: Students' Perceptions. Data were obtained from in-depth interviews with participants who were two undergraduate students majoring in English Education at a University in Indonesia. This study used a qualitative research method with a descriptive case study design. The findings of this study show that students have positive perceptions of Extensive Reading on Wattpad, which are categorized into three elements: cognitive, affective, and conative. Extensive Reading also contributes to unconsciously improving writing, vocabulary acquisition, speaking, and listening skills.

Third, a study conducted by Alajaili & Barella (2023) explored the perceptions of non-English Major students towards the use of M-Reader as a tool to support the Extensive Reading program in improving reading skills, vocabulary acquisition, and fostering interest in reading in the target language. Data were obtained from surveys and questionnaires using descriptive quantitative research methods. The participants of this study were non-English Major students from T University who participated in the Extensive Reading program using M-Reader. The findings of this

study showed that all students had a positive view towards using M-Reader to support the Extensive Reading program. Students felt that M-Reader helped improve English language skills, especially vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension.

The similarity between previous research and this research is that both focus on discussing the use of digital platforms in Extensive Reading activities; this research has differences in several aspects. First, the method used to collect data in this study is qualitative with a case study design, while previous studies have used mixed methods and quantitative. Second, the media used as reading material in this study is Instagram captions, which differs from previous studies focusing on e-books, Wattpad, and M-Reader. Third, the research participants were fourth-semester students majoring in English Education class of 2023 in the Extensive Reading activity, while previous studies examined first-year students who participated in the Extensive Reading e-book program and non-English Major students.

